

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 are pending in the application.

Claims 1-6 stand rejected.

Claims 1, 3, and 5 have been amended.

Formal Matters

In the section titled **Response to Amendments/Arguments**, the Office Action argues, in relation to the phrase “without any user input to the process of creating an expense report,” that “it has been held it is not ‘invention’ to broadly provide a mechanical or automatic means to replace manual activity which has accomplished the same result.” (*See* Office Action, p. 2.) While this argument has not been made in relation to a noted statutory basis for either the rejection or objection of specific claims, and while the Applicants’ position on the inapposite nature of this argument has been argued before (see page 11 of Applicants’ Response to Advisory Action, dated July 2, 2007), the Applicants, in order to advance prosecution, have removed from all claims all phrases similar to the phrase “without any user input to the process of creating an expense report.” Thus, Applicants hope that prosecution can now advance beyond this issue.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. §112

First Paragraph Rejections

Claims 1-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the enablement requirement. Applicants offer amendments and traverse.

Independent claims 1, 3, and 5 are rejected as allegedly failing to comply with the enablement requirement since they recite an “unreported flag.” (*See* Office Action, pp. 3-4.)

Since claims 1, 3, and 5 have been amended to remove recitation of an “unreported flag,” and since all remaining rejected claims were rejected due to their dependency upon these claims, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of this rejection.

However, Applicants note that they do not concede the legitimacy of this rejection. They reaffirm their convictions in this regard, as set out on pp. 5-6 of Applicants’ Response to Advisory Action, dated July 2, 2007. Applicants provide these amendments in order to advance prosecution.

Second Paragraph Rejections

Claims 1-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Applicants offer amendments and traverse.

Independent claims 1, 3, and 5 are rejected as allegedly being indefinite since they recite the term “unreported” and, allegedly, the phrase “without any user input subsequent to the activation of the second button.” (See Office Action, pp. 4-5.) Since claims 1, 3, and 5 have been amended to remove recitation of the term “unreported” and recitation of all phrases similar to the phrase “without any user input subsequent to the activation of the second button,” and since all remaining rejected claims were rejected due to their dependency upon these claims, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of this rejection.

However, Applicants note that they do not concede the legitimacy of this rejection. They reaffirm their convictions in this regard, as set out on pp. 6-7 of Applicants’ Response to Advisory Action, dated July 2, 2007. Applicants provide these amendments in order to advance prosecution.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vance, et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,442,526 (Vance). Applicants traverse this rejection.

Claims 1, 3, and 5 require, in response to the activation of a first button, the creation of a new activity item and the establishment of a user-selected activity type, among other things. The Office Action argues that Vance teaches these elements in Figures 16B-C. (Office Action, p. 6.) However, neither of these figures teaches the establishment of a “user-selected activity type.” These figures show Data Range window 458 and Air Item Detail window 462, respectively. (Vance 12:61-67.) In the Data Range window a “traveler enters or the corporate database autofills date, project and purpose of the trip/expense parameters.” (Vance 12:63-65.) After these are entered, the traveler “energizes the Okay button to view the Air Item Detail window 462 from which the traveler 86 enters or the corporate database 18 autofills charge parameters for the selected city pair 464. The traveler may also enter an explanation of expenses in the Explanation window 466.” (Vance 12:65-13:3.) Applicants cannot discern the idea of an “activity type” in any of the items entered on either of these windows. These are simply items that are intended to factually describe a particular occasion of travel. Further, as far as applicants can discern, none of the items is “user-selected.” The items are all facts about the occasion of travel: dates of travel, reason(s) for the travel, and costs (“charge parameters”) of travel. None of these facts are selected by the user at the time the user is entering them on windows 458 and 462. These windows simply permit the user to report facts already determined.

Claims 1, 3, and 5 require, in response to the activation of a first button, “consulting a predetermined mapping from activity types to expense types to automatically establish an expense type for the created expense item,” among other things. The Office Action argues that Vance teaches this element in Figures 16D and 16K. (Office Action, p. 6.) However, while it is not clear what features of Vance the Office Action intends to represent the “activity types,” “expense types,” and “expense items” of these claims, it is clear that neither of these figures teaches the establishment of a “pre-determined mapping.” Figure 16D shows the Car Item Detail window 470 and figure 16K shows the Check Policy Compliance window 496. (Vance 13:5 and Vance 13:29.) Vance 13:4-8 states that “[t]he traveler 86...energizes the okay button 468 to view the Car Item Detail window 470 from which the traveler 86 enters or the corporate database 18 autofills car rental and car receipt parameters,” and that on the Car Item Detail window “[t]he corporate database 18 also provides corporate policy data 472 to the traveler.” Applicants can find no teaching of a “pre-determined mapping” in this citation. The entering of car rental and receipt parameters fails to teach a “pre-determined mapping.” Vance, at best, teaches nothing more than the entering of such data, and a mapping is not required for the entering of data. Likewise, the providing of corporate policy data fails to teach a “pre-determined mapping.” Data may be provided in many ways that don’t require a pre-determined mapping. For example, the window may be designed to simply display the contents of a given file. Concerning the Check Policy Compliance window 496, Vance 13: 28-32 states that “[t]he traveler 86 views the Check Policy Compliance window 496 while the system does a policy check. The traveler may request explanations of policy violations by energizing the View Exceptions button 498.” Since the system may perform a policy check in a variety of ways which don’t involve a pre-determined mapping, the Applicants reject the idea that this citation teaches a pre-determined mapping. For

example, the system may perform a policy check by assessing whether a certain number of some list of conditions has been met.

Applicants note that a major distinction between Vance and the instant invention is that Vance generates expense reports for travel activities alone while the instant invention allows the generation of reports for multiple types of activities. This explains why claims 1, 3, and 5 require two distinct buttons. One button allows users to define the activity type of interest, while the other button results in the creation of the expense report. These actions must both be performed in the instant invention, whereas the invention described in Vance does not require the user to define the activity type. The invention in Vance concerns only travel activities. This explains why Vance teaches the need of only a single button (item 450 or 452 of Figure 16A) to launch the process that involves all of Figures 16B-L. (Vance 12: 61-63) It also explains why Vance fails to teach a “user-selected activity type.”

Applicants therefore respectfully submit that no need exists in Vance for the user to select an activity type. A single type, travel, is the only type disclosed in Vance. Finally, Applicants respectfully submit that this explains why Vance fails to teach “consulting a predetermined mapping from activity types to expense types to automatically establish an expense type for the created expense item.” Given that Vance deals only with travel activities, there is no reason not to build the expense types associated with the activity of travel into the system of Vance. In other words, there is no need for the invention in Vance to refer to a mapping to determine the relationship between the activity of travel and the cost of airline tickets. This relationship can just be built into any system operating according to the invention of Vance.

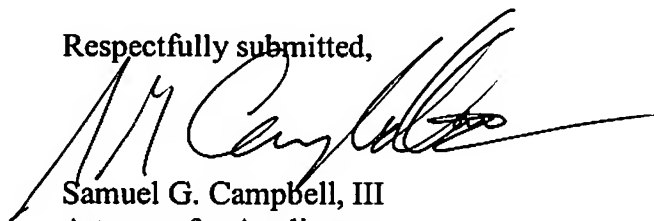
Thus, for at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn from claims 1-6 (claims 1, 3, and 5 and their respective dependent claims).

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is solicited. Nonetheless, should any issues remain that might be subject to resolution through a telephonic interview, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at 512-439-5084.

If any extensions of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) are required in order for this submission to be considered timely, Applicant hereby petitions for such extensions. Applicant also hereby authorizes that any fees due for such extensions or any other fee associated with this submission, as specified in 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or § 1.17, be charged to deposit account 502306.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Samuel G. Campbell, III', is written over the typed name and contact information.

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